



# LENA C. TAYLOR

Wisconsin State Senator • 4th District

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## Testimony of Senator Lena C. Taylor

Senate Committee on Judiciary, Corrections, Insurance Campaign Finance Reform, and Housing

Senate Bill 231 – Sex Offender E-Disclosure Act

Thursday, October 29, 2009

Honorable Members of the Committee:

Thank you for allowing testimony on Senate Bill 231, or the Sex Offender E-Disclosure Act. I am pleased to join with Rep. Jorgenson in offering this legislation this session.

To begin with, let me explain the current law in Wisconsin, those required to register as sex offenders must provide the Department of Corrections with their fingerprints, a recent photograph, the addresses where they reside, place of employment, and any school in which they are enrolled. The registrant is responsible for maintaining this information with DOC and notifying them of any changes.

Wisconsin's Sexual Offender Registry is one of the national standards of tracking in the national corrections community. It aids agents and parents in protecting children and families from predators. But the registry does not address one point of ever-growing need in this day and age.

With the advent of Facebook, Twitter, and now "sexting" – the act of sending a pornographic or nude image via text message, one in five children in American receives an on-line sexual solicitation. It is true that good parenting is the first step in preventing children from being solicited by predators, but the Legislature and Administration have a duty to public safety.

To meet this new and growing threat, the Sex Offender E-Disclosure Act requires that registered sex offenders would have to provide to the registry any personal e-mail accounts, Internet websites they create or maintain, and all Internet profiles and user names. To safeguard our children, it is appropriate that supervision agents have knowledge of what aliases an offender could be using.

To safeguard against public witch-hunting or hampering business efforts we have included two important provisions. One, this information would not be made public, but it would be maintained in the DOC's records. Second, the reporting requirement does not apply to business and commercial internet aliases and screen names. This is to ensure confidential business secrets remain so.

In light of the growing technological innovations that reach our children daily, we must keep up in protecting our children. The Sex Offender E-Disclosure Act is a new tool in toolbox of supervision of offenders. It makes good sense that we add that tool immediately.

Thank you.